

BRADDOCK DISTRICT COUNCIL *NEWS*

July 2006

Internet Address www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/bos/bd/homepage.htm

Braddock District Council Picnic and Best of Braddock Awards

July 11, 2006

Braddock District Meeting Hall
9002 Burke Lake Road
Burke, VA 22015
(703)-425-9300

BDC Future Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, July 11 – Annual Picnic/BOB Awards/
Election of Officers

Tuesday, August 8-No BDC Meeting

Tuesday, September 12-General Membership

Tuesday, October 10-General Membership

Tuesday, November 9-General Membership

Message from the Chair

This message will be my last as Chair of the Braddock District Council. I have been privileged to serve in this position for the past two years. In that period of time, there have been a number of significant accomplishments: The annual Community Association Workshop was initiated and is now considered an integral part of the Council program; we reviewed and revised the Council By-Laws to bring them into accord with current practices; we revised our dues structure to more accurately reflect the budgetary needs and plans for the Council; and we designed an innovative Communications Program for the Council. We also had a number of very interesting meetings—notably, the roundtable of all of our Braddock District appointees to commissions and task forces; the update on construction and master plans at George Mason University, NOVA, Fairfax County Schools, and the Park Authority; and the many meetings at which our County staff members briefed us on issues ranging from road maintenance to pedestrian safety. There is still a lot to do—we need to engage more HOAs and CAs in the Council; we need to broaden our base of dues paying members; and we need to implement the Communications Program.

Happily, these challenges will be in the hands of a superb executive committee as reflected in the nominees for Council officers for 2006-2007. It is my honor to put before you the slate of officers for next year's Council:

For Chair: **Bruce Wallachy**, Kings Park West CA

For Vice-Chair: **Tom Reinkober**, Canterbury Woods CA

For Treasurer: **Peg Manella**, Bonnie Brae CA

For Secretary: **Tena Bluhm**, George Mason Forest CA

These nominees will be put before the Council for election at our July meeting and will take office at the conclusion of that meeting. At the July meeting, we also will honor our Best of Braddock Awardees; they are listed in Supervisor Bulova's column.

I want to say a special word of thanks to my officers, **Jeff Nolan**, **Colin Campbell**, and **Ivan Dietrich**. Jeff Nolan served as Vice-Chair of the Council throughout my two year tenure. His balanced and thorough hand is seen in the successful initiation of the annual Workshop, in the revised By-Laws, and in the Communications Program. Colin Campbell served as Secretary for this past year; he helped keep me straight! And, then there is Ivan Dietrich. Ivan has been the treasurer of the Council for nearly 4 years and this year, will step down as "Treasurer Emeritus". Ivan's take on being the "keeper of the till" was to execute the job with wit and humor and we will formally recognize his contribution to the Council at the July meeting.

As is often the case, the current Executive Committee will be busy right to the end. Among the changes in the new By-Laws is that our fiscal year is now July 1 to June 30. **Dues from HOAs and CAs are payable on June 30 of each year.** However, because the by-laws have just been implemented, we will send out invoices for 2006-2007 dues in July and ask that they be paid by September 30. We had promised that we would provide the membership with **summaries of the presentations and discussions at our last Community Association**

Workshop; that summary is included with this newsletter and hard copies will be available at the Braddock District office.

Our last official task as outgoing officers is to sponsor the **Annual July Meeting and BOB Awards Presentation which will take place on Tuesday, July 11.** We are planning an international food fest this year and hope to have a number of local restaurants on hand to provide foods and tastes of the diverse community that comprises Braddock District.

Finally, I want to thank all of the representatives of our community who attended the Council meetings, workshops, and events over the past two years. I have been encouraged in my stewardship of the Council by your interest and enthusiasm for all things Braddock and by your support and assistance. Thanks most especially go to Supervisor Bulova and her staff for their help, guidance, and energy!

With warm thanks and regards,

Janyce Hedetniemi

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! JULY 11, 2006



Supervisor Sharon Bulova invites you to attend the annual picnic of the Braddock District Council of Community Associations. The picnic is an opportunity to reward those who have been so generous with their time and energy.

In addition to the picnic, the Best of Braddock (BOB) awards will be presented individually, as well as the Braddock District Citizen of the Year award. This is a tradition that the council holds dear in honoring those who work so hard for this district. Hope to see everyone out in full force!

This event will be held at 7:30 p.m. in Braddock Hall, adjacent to Supervisor Bulova's office in the Kings Park Library building. The address is 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015.

If you have any questions concerning either event, please call Christina Fullmer in Supervisor Bulova's office at 703-425-9300.

Braddock District Council Officers

Chair, Janyce Hedetniemi

Vice-Chair, Jeff Nolan

Treasurer, Ivan Dietrich

Recording Secretary, Colin Campbell

Communications Chair, Bruce Wallachy

SUPERVISOR BULOVA'S CORNER

- I'm looking forward to our annual **Braddock District Council Picnic on July 11th**! Not only will we be treated to some outstanding local fare, get to spend quality time with good friends and Community Association counterparts, but we will hear some terrific stories about people and organizations that have made our Braddock District such a great place to live. See inside this issue of the BDC newsletter for winners of the world famous BOB (Best of Braddock) Awards. Good deeds are contagious. Taking time to recognize people who have gone "above and beyond" serves also to inspire others to do likewise. We've got some great awardees this year!
- Speaking of taking time to say thanks, I would like to take this opportunity to say how very much I have enjoyed working with **Jan Hedetneimi** as Chair of the Braddock District Council during the past two years. Under her able leadership, we have held two Community Workshops, providing valuable free information and advice on the issues our neighborhoods struggle with. She has also been a great mentor, bringing new blood into the organization and updating the Braddock District Council's vintage By-laws. Best of all, Jan will be handing over the baton to an outstanding slate of BDC leadership for the next year. She gets an A++ for succession planning! **Thank you, Jan!**
- Our May BDC meeting featured a program called: **"Big Stuff Happening in a Neighborhood Near You" GMU, NVCC, Parks & Schools Capital Projects**. As the meeting ended, Kings Park West President Tony Vellucci suggested that my office provide a forum for nearby neighborhoods to discuss growth issues associated with George Mason University's expansion plans. I agreed that such a forum would be a good idea. A planning meeting was held on June 12th to set plans in motion for a **George Mason – Braddock District Community Council**. My office will be mailing out letters of invitation to community association leaders near George Mason University in early July. Tony agreed to host a pre-council meeting in July with community association representatives to prepare of a list of issues community members would like to have addressed/discussed at future meetings.

The first meetings of the **George Mason – Braddock District Community Council** will be largely educational and will include: a briefing on the university's Comprehensive Plan, Transportation issues and off-campus matters such as the County's zoning laws, and dealing with "life style conflicts" that sometimes arise when students rent neighborhood housing. Tentatively, meetings of the Council are scheduled for **Tuesday, September 4th, Tuesday, October 3rd, Monday, November 6th, and Wednesday January 3rd**. Meetings will be held in Braddock Hall, adjacent to my office and the Kings Park Library. Look for more information on this in a letter that you should be receiving within the next couple of weeks.

- The weekend of June 2nd, 3rd and 4th featured the debut of our now much acclaimed book **Braddock's True Gold, 20th Century Life in the Heart of Fairfax County**. Please help us to get the word out to your neighbors that this book, with its companion map, is now available for purchase (\$25.00) in the following nearby locations: **Burke Florist** in University Mall, **Judy Ryan's** in Twinbrooke Shopping Center, **The Cricket Box** in Kings Park Shopping Center, the **Fairfax City Museum** on Main Street, **Maps and Publications** on the first floor of the **Fairfax County Government Center**.

If you are looking for a program next year for one of your meetings, members of the **A Look Back at Braddock Task Force** are looking forward to sharing information about the project – collecting oral history interviews, photographs and historic materials, and transforming them into a fascinating little book. We also have a 16 minute video about the project that we can weave into a program at a civic or homeowner association meeting. Please give my office a call at 703-425-9300 if you're interested.

Hope to see you on July 11th!

Sharon Bulova

BOB (Best of Braddock) Award Recipients

Citizen of the Year

Bo Tumasz - Chapel Square West Community Association

Young Person of the Year

Christina Azimi - Middleridge

Sara Duffy - Kings Park West

Outstanding Business Person of the Year

Carolyn Maleknasri - Director of Special Need Programs, Capital Gymnastics, Burke

Most Can-Do Public Employees

Daria Parnes - Kings Park West Branch Manager, Staff and Volunteers at Kings Park Library

Neighborhood Beautification

Bristow Village Homeowners Association (On Americana Drive in Annandale) - Olivia Chattin, President

Commercial Beautification

Cardinal Plaza Shell Service Station - Scott Brown

Organization Really Making a Difference

Canterbury Woods Swim and Tennis Club - Paul Wenner VP

Special Awards for Contributions to Braddock Community

John Converse - Treasurer, Canterbury Woods Civic Association

Helen Reimherr - Little River Glen volunteer

Jessica Estrada-Palma - Citizen Who Took Charge

Ivan Dietrich - Treasurer, Braddock District Council

Lifetime Achievement Award

John McAnaw - Chair, Parks and Lakes Committee, Kings Park West Civic Association



The first weekend of June marked the debut of Braddock District's now much acclaimed book **Braddock's True Gold, 20th Century Life in the Heart of Fairfax County**. This book, with its companion map, is now available for purchase (\$25.00) in the following nearby locations: **Burke Florist** in University Mall, **Judy Ryan's** in Twinbrooke Shopping Center, **The Cricket Box** in Kings Park Shopping Center, the **Fairfax City Museum** on Main Street, **Maps and Publications** on the first floor of the **Fairfax County Government Center**.

If your club or organization is looking for an interesting program next year, members of the **A Look Back at Braddock Task Force** would like to share information about their project – oral history interview sessions, collection of photographs and historic materials, and transforming them into a fascinating little book about our middle part of Fairfax County. A 16 minute video about the project features highlights of the project. Please contact Supervisor Sharon Bulova's office at 703 425 9300 for more information.

BRADDOCK DISTRICT COUNCIL ASSOCIATION WORKSHOP

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Kings Park Library and Braddock Hall on Burke Lake Road.

6:00 to 6:30 p.m.	Registration and light supper
6:30 to 7:00 p.m.	Opening Session
7:00 to 7:45 p.m.	First Round of Breakout Sessions
8:00 to 8:45 p.m.	Second Round of Breakout Sessions
9:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Plenary Session and Reports from the Breakout Groups

There were **three topics** discussed at this workshop in **four different workshops**. As was done last year, **attendees** were able to **participate** in **two of the four workshops**.

The four breakout sessions included:

- A. Storm Water Facilities: Liability and Maintenance. Speakers: David Bobzien, Fairfax County Attorney and Don Lacquement, Engineer III, Stormwater Planning Division, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- B. Storm Water Facilities: Enhancement, Aesthetics, and Environmental Protection. Speakers: Steve Aitcheson, Acting Chief, Watershed Projects Implementation Branch, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services; Michael P. Knapp, Director, Urban Forestry Division, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services; and Michael Rolband, President, Wetland Studies
- C. Liabilities and Maintenance Associated with Community Amenities (pools, tennis courts, and open spaces). Speakers--Laurie L. Dolson, Law Offices of Laurie L. Dolson, P.C. and John Yeatman, Fairfax County Department of Health
- D. Engaging the Diverse Populations in Your Community. Speakers: Angie Carerra, Fairfax County Language Liaison and Tom Reinkober, President, Canterbury Woods Civic Association

TOPIC A

Storm Water Facilities: Liabilities and Maintenance

Speakers: Don Lacquement, Engineer III, Storm Water Planning Division, Department of Public Works & Environmental Services
David Bobzien, County Attorney

Background: PL-566 pertains to the U.S. Public Law that created a county-federal partnership whereby the federal government provided survey and design for water retention facilities, as well as 65% of the funding for construction if the county provided 35% of the construction costs. Four of six of large PL-566 lakes in Fairfax County are in the Braddock District: Lake Barton, Royal Lake, Lake Braddock, and Woodglen Lake. All 987 PL-566 dry ponds are maintained by Fairfax County, but owned by HOAs. Trickle ditches were created to make silt collection easier. Call: 703.934.2800 Maintenance & Stormwater Management Division.

Questions & Answers: Why should a community association – particularly HOAs – be concerned about extended water detention pond risers? Answer: Burke Conservancy HOA was recently sued, and settled out of court, for the case of a child who was rescued from a pond, but suffered brain damage. Each Community Association should have a group to monitor their dry pond(s).

Is there a listing of ponds in my community? Answer: Such a listing is not readily available.

What about clearing weeds or trees in perennial streams and bordering Resource Protection Areas (RPAs)? Answer: First contact the county because you may be liable for punitive damages.

What can you plant on a hillside that abuts a stream? Answer: Mike Knapp (urban forester) has that information.

Recommendations: Staffing should be increased to provide timely responses to community requests for pond maintenance, especially for problems that don't result in flooding; this is a liability issue.

TOPIC B

Stormwater Facilities: Enhancement, Aesthetics and Environmental Protection

Speakers: Steve Aitcheson, Director, Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division
Michael P. Knapp, Director, Fairfax County Urban Forestry Division
Michael Rolband, President, Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.

Stormwater Management: To protect water systems both Federal and State laws have been enacted governing the requirement for and the maintenance of dry and wet ponds. Many community associations in Fairfax County have wet and dry ponds on their properties that are a part of the integrated stormwater management system and are subject to these laws.

Wet and dry ponds have multiple purposes: to prevent flooding and erosion, and to reduce pollutants from entering our water systems. These ponds capture stormwater runoff from the hard surfaces created by buildings' roofs and paved or concrete surfaces (impervious area). The difference is that wet ponds retain water always, while dry ponds fill during storms and release water over next 48 to 72 hours but remain dry most of the time. Both types allow sediment and pollutants to settle from the runoff water.

Property owners (be they HOAs, County or State) are required to maintain these facilities. Routine maintenance includes grass mowing, and trash/debris removal to eliminate obstructions. For HOA owned ponds, the county maintains the proper functioning of the system within the easement proscribed on land records. To report a problem, call the Maintenance & Stormwater Management Division at 703-934-2800.

Stormwater runoff is not treated prior to entering the creeks, rivers and bays. Therefore, chemicals, oils, pet waste, paint and other substances should not be dumped into the stormwater systems. These substances damage native animals and plants. Yard waste and lawn fertilizer increase nutrients in our stormwater and encourage growth of algae, depleting the oxygen content on which fish and other marine life depend. Please properly handle these hazards. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/stormwater or [/dpwes/publications/urbanfor.htm](http://dpwes/publications/urbanfor.htm) for stormwater issues.

Creating Aesthetic Appeal: The dry and wet pond areas can be aesthetically improved. However, there are restrictions on the type of plants, and the design of the modifications when changing their appearance. The function of the ponds must remain unimpeded. The county is willing to assist HOAs in designing improvements and selecting the right plant material. Contact the Urban Forest Management Division at 703-324-1770 and ask for the Urban Forester of the Day.

Rain Gardens: HOAs and individual homeowners can assist in reducing the amount, and improving the quality, of stormwater runoff from their property by constructing rain gardens. The design and construction of a rain garden is specific to the local soils on the property, the percent of impervious areas, the available footprint, and numerous other design criteria. As such, consult a qualified design professional that will assure the design is adequate for the specific residence. Further, numerous county and regional regulations restrict where and how residents may build rain gardens. Always contact the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) Director for permission prior to construction.

Other Stormwater Management Activities: The county has a program to encourage stenciling stormwater drains with reminders that the water goes directly into water systems. Contact the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District at 703-324-1460.

Summary: Stormwater management is routine management requirement. However, with guidance from County offices the facilities can serve a necessary purpose and still blend into your community aesthetically.

TOPIC C

Liabilities and Maintenance Associated with Community Amenities

Speakers: Laurie Dolson, Law Offices of Laurie L. Dolson, P.C.
John Yetman, Fairfax Community Health and Safety

Homeowner and Civic Associations: Homeowner associations (mandatory membership because of recorded covenants binding on title to home) are governed by the Virginia Property Owners' Association Act. Civic Associations are voluntary. The Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act applies to both, if incorporated. Governing documents (HOA covenants, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws) often state what is required to be maintained.

While both are generally run by volunteers or hired management agents, the association is the legal entity responsible for maintaining community facilities. The management firm does not assume the association's liability. To protect Board members/volunteers from possible individual liability, both entities should be incorporated. Insurance coverage is highly recommended. Boards should consult with knowledgeable insurance professionals. Whether or not an association is liable, the legal costs of defending suits can be significant, and insurance should provide for such expense.

There is no liability merely because an accident occurs on association property. To be found liable, the association must be negligent. Negligence is the failure to perform a duty to others in a reasonable manner, such failure resulting in injury. If the association has fulfilled its duties to properly maintain its facilities according to reasonable standards, to warn others of any dangerous conditions on its property, and to enforce established health and safety rules, it will not likely be found to be negligent. (Possible defense: contributory negligence – plaintiff's injuries caused by his/her own negligence.)

Even though an HOA may no longer need or want to maintain an amenity, such as a pool or playground, the governing documents may require that it be maintained to a reasonable standard. While pools are subject to specific County maintenance regulations, an association's playgrounds, tennis courts, lakes and ponds are not, and the HOA must determine reasonable maintenance standards, with the guidance of experts in applicable fields. The Community Associations Institute has a number of publications that describe reasonable standards for maintenance of certain community amenities (www.caionline.org/bookstore.cfm) or 1-888-224-4321.)

Pool Standards: Pool health and safety are regulated by the County whose enforcement officials generally operate using a Failure-to-Correct policy. This means that cited violations will be checked for corrective action and pools fined or closed when violations are not corrected. In imminent life safety cases, failure to meet standards may result in immediate pool closure and possibly criminal misdemeanor. Such cases are poor water quality, entrapment hazards, and no or insufficiently credentialed guards and pool operators.

Management firms operating pools for HOA or pool associations do not assume the liability from their clients. Additionally, pool users cannot be legally bound to a pre-injury waiver of liability. The HOA or pool association remains responsible. Good advice for HOAs and pool associations is to monitor the operation of the pool.

Failure to open a pool does not eliminate the association's responsibility to comply with applicable health and safety regulations. The pool must still be protected with fences and the water quality must not pose a health risk to the community, such as a breeding source for mosquitoes. County officials are very helpful. A good practice is to call them (703-246-2300) with your questions and ask for recommendations.

TOPIC D

Engaging the Diverse Populations in Your Community

Speakers: Angie Carrera, Language Access Coordinator for Fairfax County Government

Speakers and workshop participants, representing many diverse cultures, shared experiences and examples about issues faced in Fairfax County.

Vision: Participants developed a vision statement: “**A safe and caring community, where all cultures can feel comfortable, accepted and welcomed.**”

Barriers to this Vision: Workshop participants provided a list of barriers in reaching the vision. This is a necessary step in working toward the vision – identifying the impediments.

- Differences in language, interests, customs and culture
- Apathy for new residents
- Fear of losing cultural identity
- Fear and Prejudice from both cultural views
- Tendency to elevate issues before trying to resolve on personal or local basis
- Fear of getting involved with authority figures
- Lives too busy for getting to know neighbors
- Lack of understanding the value of participation

Actions to Break Down Barriers

Workshop participants identified actions to breaking down the barriers to achieve the vision.

Information Sharing

The best approach is that which is targeted and straightforward. Information sources can be community news letters, from realtors explaining to new home buyers that covenants exist, and simple letters targeting the new immigrants in their native language, making it personal.

- **Knowing Your Neighbors'** full name and acknowledging them when you see them.
- **Association Cultural Contacts** for residents to call when they need something explained to them in their native language and **Welcome** packets. Translators can assist as needed or proactively through writing news items. Welcome committee members may be fluent in native language of residents.
- **Family Oriented Events** in the community and school.

Observations

Language and cultural barriers will come down in time and will happen faster with each new generation. As children from immigrants families attend neighborhood schools and play with friends, they will become more Americanized and diverse languages/cultures will begin to merge within the American Melting Pot.